

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MELANIE AH SOON

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate an outstanding educator from my State, Melanie Ah Soon from Sacred Hearts Academy, for receiving the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

This award, administered by the National Science Foundation on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, is the highest recognition that a mathematics or science teacher may receive. Since the program's inception in 1983, more than 4,000 educators nationwide have been recognized for their contributions to mathematics and science education. As a former educator and principal, I know firsthand about the countless hours that go into creating curricula, and it makes me proud to see outstanding teachers receive recognition for their hard work.

The dedication of Melanie to her field and to the children of Hawaii is undeniable. I applaud her for receiving this outstanding recognition, and I wish her the very best in her future endeavors.●

REMEMBERING GEORGE ROGERS

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I wish to memorialize one of Alaska's greatest pioneers and statesmen, Mr. George W. Rogers. Born to immigrant parents in 1917, George Rogers died on October 3, 2010, in the Juneau home he designed. By his side were Jean, his wife of 68 years, their children, and several close friends.

Often described as a "Renaissance man," George devoted his adult life to the spirit of the Territory and State of Alaska. As an economist, politician, educator, author, architect and artist, his contributions shaped the state and he will always be part of Alaska's story.

Armed with a B.S. in economics from University of California at Berkeley, George began his long and historic Alaskan career in 1945. With the hope of feeding U.S. troops with less expense, the Office of Price Administration sent him up to negotiate reduced prices for raw fish. The job ended with the close of WWII, but George stayed on to advise several territorial governors, among them Ernest Gruening, who later would become one of Alaska's first U.S. Senators. It was Governor Gruening who encouraged George to attend Harvard for an MPA and a Ph.D.

Dr. Rogers saw in economics the effects of dynamic forces of change, largely those related political, bureaucratic, and technical conditions. To George, Alaska was the perfect petri dish to study his "real world" of economics, and to that study he devoted his life.

At Governor Gruening's request, George created a revenue system for the Territory of Alaska. Later, during

the fight for statehood, Territorial Governor B. Frank Heintzelman sent him as a consultant to the Alaska Constitutional Convention where he also served as the stand-in for the convention's secretary. He considered his greatest contribution to the convention his work on apportionment to ensure Alaska's rural people are fairly represented.

Of the convention he said:

We had been through a decade-long . . . worldwide depression. We had World War II, and so Republicans and Democrats both realized that we've got to put aside political differences and look at the construction of our government. And it was such a wonderful, uplifting experience to have the two competing parties sit together and work this out. . . . it's one of the high points of my whole life because it was a period of great hope.

George applied this experience of hope and optimism to the rest of his professional and personal life. Believing in the possible, he influenced the fair development and treatment of Alaska's fisheries, timber, and oil for the benefit of all. He was involved in circumpolar research, the development of the Alaska Permanent Fund, and he helped to establish the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska. The Institute observes its 50th anniversary this year, dedicating the celebration to Dr. Rogers.

Much of George's personal time was shared with the city of Juneau. Elected to the assembly both before and after statehood, he served on numerous committees and as a member of the Juneau Rotary Club. His architectural skills provided the design for the Zach Gordon Youth Center, a vibrant recreation facility dedicated exclusively to Juneau's youth.

George was a great enthusiast and supporter of the arts. He designed sets for local productions, created the art for program covers and posters, and acted and sang on the stage. His abilities and openness of heart encouraged others to greater heights. He was a lifetime member of the Juneau Symphony Foundation, a member of the Juneau Lyric Opera, and the Juneau Arts and Humanities Council.

A loving and caring husband and father, George and his wife Jean were a unit. With the addition of six adopted children, George redesigned and expanded their two-room, 1948 miner's cabin until it became a five-bedroom, two-bath home. The house burned in 2000, but the irrepressible George began designs for the new one the following day.

As we bid farewell to his physical presence, George's many contributions live in perpetuity. Whether through his advisory work, his scholarly work, or the seven books he wrote—some of which have been adapted as educational textbooks—he made a lasting difference.

George's friends not only realize the depth of his impact on Alaskan life, they will also always remember the

twinkle in his eye, his quick wit, his honesty, and his ability to best them at dominos.

George Rogers was a great man, a role model, an Alaskan, and he has left an enduring legacy.●

GRANADA HILLS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the remarkable accomplishments of Granada Hills Charter High School's Academic Decathlon team, which won the 2011 Academic Decathlon and its first national championship. Members of the national championship team include: Austin Kang, Harsimar Dhanoo, Elysia Eastty, Joon Lee, Shagun Goyal, Riki Higashida, Eugene Lee, Sindhura Seeni, and Celine Ta. The team is coached by Matt Arnold, Nick Weber, and Spencer Wolf.

Each year, hundreds of high schools throughout the Nation compete for the honor of becoming Academic Decathlon national champions. This year, Granada Hills Charter High School earned the distinction of winning its first national championship, as well as California's 9th consecutive national title and 18th overall championship.

Competing in an Academic Decathlon is a daunting task. Students spend many hours studying, practicing, and competing, often away from their family and friends. The Academic Decathlon's intense 2-day national final competitions include testing at seven different events, speeches, essay writing, and interviewing exercises. As the Granada Hills community celebrates the hard work and achievement of the Granada Hills Decathlon team, I invite all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating California's Granada Hills Charter High School Academic Decathlon team on becoming the 2011 National Academic Decathlon Champions.●

MECCA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I welcome the students from the 6th grade class at Mecca Elementary School, who are visiting Washington, DC. I am particularly honored to have these students visit the U.S. Capitol because they know firsthand how important it is to speak up and be heard to make government officials aware of vital issues that affect their community.

Like all Americans, the residents of Mecca, CA, have the right to expect that the air they breathe is clean, and that the Federal and State government will enforce the Nation's environmental laws to protect them from dangerous pollution. Unfortunately, some residents in Mecca became sick from overpowering air pollution coming from a nearby waste recycling facility. The noxious odors posed a public health risk to the two schools located